CLAIMS:

1.   A random prize awarding feature to selectively provide a feature outcome on a gaming console, the console being arranged to offer the feature outcome when a game has achieved a trigger condition, the console including

5   trigger means arranged to test for the trigger condition and to initiate the feature outcome when the trigger condition occurs, the trigger condition being determined by an event having a probability related to desired average turnover between successive occurrences of the trigger conditions on the console.

10   2.   The prize awarding feature of claim 1, wherein the trigger condition is determined by an event having a probability related both to expected turnover between successive occurrences of the trigger conditions on the console and the credits bet on the respective game.

Sub. B's   3.   The prize awarding feature of claim 1 or 2, wherein the console is

15   arranged to play a main game, during which testing for the trigger condition will occur, and the feature outcome initiated by the trigger condition is the awarding of one or more feature games.

4.   The prize awarding feature of claim 3, wherein the main game is a standard game normally offered on the console and each feature game is a

20   jackpot game associated with a special jackpot prize.

Sub. B's   5.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the trigger condition is determined by selecting a random number from a predetermined range of numbers to be associated with each main game, and allotting to the game a set of numbers selected from the

25   predetermined range of numbers, the size of the set of allotted numbers being related to the wager bet on the respective game, and in the event that one of the numbers allotted to the game matches the randomly selected number, indicating that the trigger condition has occurred.

Sub. a's   6.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5,

30   wherein the trigger condition is determined by selecting a random number from a predetermined range of numbers to be associated with each main game, and allotting to the game a number in the set of numbers, the allotted number being proportional to the wager and in the event that the allotted number is greater than or equal to the randomly selected number, indicating

35   that the trigger condition has occurred.

7.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6,
wherein the trigger condition is determined by selecting a random number
from a predetermined range of numbers to be associated with each main
game, and allotting to the game a number in the set of numbers, the allotted

5   number being inversely proportional to the wager and in the event that the
allotted number is greater than or equal to the randomly selected number,
indicating that the trigger condition has occurred.

8.   The prize awarding feature of claim 6 or 7, wherein the predetermined
random number range is related to the desired average turnover on the

10   console between successive initiations of the feature game divided by the
credit value for that console.

9.   The prize awarding feature of claim 7 or 8, wherein the set of allotted
numbers includes a number for each credit bet on the game.

10.   The prize awarding feature of claim 5, wherein the predetermined

15   random number range is equal to the desired average turnover on the console
between successive initiations of the feature game expressed as a currency
denomination.

11.   The prize awarding feature of claim 10, wherein the currency
denomination is cents.

Sub, a2> 20   12.   The prize awarding feature of claim 10 or 11, wherein the set of
allotted numbers includes one number for each unit of the currency
denomination wagered on the game.

13.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of the preceding
claims wherein the gaming console allots a block of numbers within the

25   predetermined range to the game.

14.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 13, wherein the gaming
console allots the block of numbers containing the lowest numbers in the
predetermined range to the game.

Sub, a3>

30   15.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of the preceding
claims wherein the feature outcome is a simplified game having a higher
probability of winning a major prize than in the main game.

16.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 15, wherein the feature
game provides a plurality of pseudo-reels with a restricted number of
different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the

35   reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

Sub, 84>
17. The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 14, wherein the feature game provides 3, 4, or 5, 6 or 16 pseudo-reels with 2, 3 or 4 different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

5 18. The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 16 or 17, wherein the symbols are of equal value and equally weighted on each reel.

Sub. a4>
19. The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the prizes are of unequal value and the symbols have different weightings on at least one reel.

10 20. The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein one or more gaming consoles are associated with a gaming system, each of the gaming consoles being connected to a gaming network and including a signal output means arranged to produce an output signal in response to operation of the respective console, such that a central feature

15 jackpot system connected to the network provides an incrementing jackpot pool which increases in response to signals from the connected consoles and the feature jackpot game on each machine awards a jackpot drawn from the jackpot pool.

21. The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 20, wherein the jackpot

20 pool is incremented with each game played on each gaming console in the system.

22. The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 20, wherein the jackpot pool is incremented with each token bet on each game played on each gaming console in the system.

25 23. A random prize awarding feature to selectively provide a feature outcome on a gaming console, the console being arranged to offer the feature outcome when a game has achieved a trigger condition, the console including trigger means arranged to test for the trigger condition and to initiate the feature outcome when the trigger condition occurs, the trigger condition

30 being determined by an event having a probability related to the credits bet per game on the console.

24. The prize awarding feature of claim 23, wherein the trigger condition is determined by an event having a probability related both to turnover on the console and the credits bet on the respective game.

Sub.a5> 35 25. The prize awarding feature of claim 23 or 24, wherein the console is arranged to play a main game, during which testing for the trigger condition

will occur, and the feature outcome initiated by the trigger condition is the awarding of a feature game.

26.   The prize awarding feature of claim 24, wherein the main game is a standard game normally offered on the console and the feature game is a jackpot game associated with a special jackpot prize.

Sub. a6>

27.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 23 to 26, wherein the trigger condition is determined by selecting a random number from a predetermined range of numbers to be associated with each main game, and allotting to the game a set of numbers selected from the predetermined range of numbers, the size of the set of allotted numbers being related to the wager bet on the respective game, and in the event that one of the numbers allotted to the game matches the randomly selected number, indicating that the trigger condition has occurred.

28.   The prize awarding feature of claim 27, wherein the predetermined random number range is related to the desired average turnover on the console between successive initiations of the feature game divided by the credit value for that console.

Sub. a7>

29.   The prize awarding feature of claim 27 or 28, wherein the set of allotted numbers includes a number for each credit bet on the game.

30.   The prize awarding feature of claim 27, wherein the predetermined random number range is equal to the desired average turnover on the console between successive initiations of the feature game expressed as a currency denomination.

31.   The prize awarding feature of claim 30, wherein the currency denomination is cents.

Sub. a8>

32.   The prize awarding feature of claim 30 or 31, wherein the set of allotted numbers includes one number for each unit of the currency denomination wagered on the game.

33.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 23 to 32, wherein the gaming console allots a block of numbers within the predetermined range to the game.

34.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 33, wherein the gaming console allots the block of numbers containing the lowest numbers in the predetermined range to the game.

Sub. a9 >

35.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 23 to 34, wherein the feature outcome is a simplified game having a higher probability of a major prize being won than in the main game.

36.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 35, wherein the feature game provides a plurality of pseudo-reels with a restricted number of different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

37.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 35, wherein the feature game provides 3, 4, or 5, 6 or 16 pseudo-reels with 2, 3 or 4 different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

Sub. a10 >

38.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 36 or 37, wherein the symbols are of equal value and equally weighted on each reel.

39.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 23 to 38, wherein the prizes are of unequal value and the symbols have different weightings on at least one reel.

Sub. B6 >

40.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 23 to 39, wherein one or more gaming consoles are associated with the system, each of which is connected to a gaming network and includes signal output means arranged to produce an output signal in response to operation of the respective console, such that a central feature jackpot system connected to the network provides an incrementing jackpot pool which increases in response to signals from the connected consoles and the feature jackpot game on each machine awards a jackpot drawn from the jackpot pool.

41.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 40, wherein the jackpot pool is incremented with each game played on each gaming console in the system.

42.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 40, wherein the jackpot pool is incremented with each token bet on each game played on each gaming console in the system.

43.   A gaming console including a random prize awarding feature to produce a feature outcome, the console being arranged to offer the feature outcome when a game has achieved a trigger condition and including trigger means arranged to test for the trigger condition and to initiate the feature outcome when the trigger condition occurs, the trigger condition being determined by an event having a probability related to desired average

turnover between successive occurrences of the trigger conditions on the
console.

44.   The gaming console of claim 43, wherein the trigger condition is
determined by an event having a probability related both to turnover on the
console and the credits bet on the respective game.

Sub. al1>

45.   The gaming console of claim 43 or 44, wherein the console is arranged
to play a main game, during which testing for the trigger condition will
occur, and the feature outcome initiated by the trigger condition is the
awarding of a feature game.

46.   The gaming console of claim 45, wherein the main game is a standard
game normally offered on the console and the feature game is a jackpot game
associated with a special jackpot prize.

Sub. al2>

47.   The gaming console as claimed in any one of claims 45 to 46, wherein
the trigger condition is determined by selecting a random number from a
predetermined range of numbers to be associated with each main game, and
allotting to the game a set of numbers selected from the predetermined range
of numbers, the size of the set of allotted numbers being related to the wager
bet on the respective game, and in the event that one of the numbers allotted
to the game matches the randomly selected number, indicating that the
trigger condition has occurred.

48.   The gaming console of claim 47, wherein the predetermined random
number range is related to the desired average turnover on the console
between successive initiations of the feature game divided by the credit value
for that console.

Sub. al5>

49.   The gaming console of claim 47 or 48, wherein the set of allotted
numbers includes a number for each credit bet on the game.

50.   The gaming console of claim 47, wherein the predetermined random
number range is equal to the desired average turnover on the console
between successive initiations of the feature game expressed as a currency
denomination.

51.   The gaming console of claim 50, wherein the currency denomination is
cents.

Sub. al4>

52.   The gaming console of claim 50 or 51, wherein the set of allotted
numbers includes one number for each unit of the currency denomination
wagered on the game.

53. The gaming console as claimed in any one of claims 43 to 52 wherein the gaming console allots a block of numbers within the predetermined range to the game.

54. The gaming console as claimed in claim 53, wherein the gaming console allots the block of numbers containing the lowest numbers in the predetermined range to the game.

Sub. a15>

55. The gaming console as claimed in any one of claims 43 to 54, wherein the feature outcome is a simplified game having a higher probability of success than the main game.

56. The gaming console as claimed in claim 55, wherein the feature game provides a plurality of pseudo-reels with a restricted number of different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

57. The gaming console as claimed in claim 56, wherein the feature game provides 3, 4, or 5, 6 or 16 pseudo-reels with 2, 3 or 4 different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

Sub. a16>

58. The gaming console as claimed in claim 56 or 57, wherein the symbols are of equal value and equally weighted on each reel.

59. The gaming console as claimed in any one of claims 43 to 58, wherein the prizes are of unequal value and the symbols have different weightings on at least one reel.

60. The gaming console as claimed in any one of claims 43 to 59, wherein the console is arranged to be connected to a gaming network and includes signal output means arranged to produce an output signal in response to operation of the console, such that a central feature jackpot system connected to the network provides an incrementing jackpot pool which increases in response to signals from the connected consoles and the feature jackpot game is arranged to award a jackpot prize drawn from the jackpot pool.

61. A method of awarding a random prize on a gaming console, the console being arranged to offer a feature outcome when the game has achieved a trigger condition, the method including testing for the trigger condition and when the trigger condition occurs offering the feature outcome, the trigger condition being determined by an event having a

probability related to desired average turnover between successive occurrences of the trigger condition on the respective console.

62. The method of claim 61, wherein the trigger condition is determined by an event having a probability related both to turnover on the console and

5   the credits bet on the respective game.

63. The method of claim 62, wherein the console is arranged to play a main game, during which testing for the trigger condition will occur, and the feature outcome initiated by the trigger condition is the awarding of a feature game.

10   64. The method of claim 63, wherein the main game is a standard game normally offered on the console and the feature game is a jackpot game associated with a special jackpot prize.

Sub. a17> 65. The method as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 64, wherein the trigger condition is determined by selecting a random number from a

15   predetermined range of numbers to be associated with each main game, and allotting to the game a set of numbers selected from the predetermined range of numbers, the size of the set of allotted numbers being related to the wager bet on the respective game, and in the event that one of the numbers allotted to the game matches the randomly selected number, indicating that the

20   trigger condition has occurred.

66. The method of claim 65, wherein the predetermined random number range is related to the desired average turnover on the console between successive initiations of the feature game divided by the credit value for that console.

Sub. a18 25 67. The method of claim 65 or 66, wherein the set of allotted numbers includes a number for each credit bet on the game.

68. The method of claim 65, wherein the predetermined random number range is equal to the desired average turnover on the console between successive initiations of the feature game expressed as a currency

30   denomination.

69. The method of claim 68, wherein the currency denomination is cents.

Sub.a9> 70. The method of claim 68 or 69, wherein the set of allotted numbers includes one number for each unit of the currency denomination wagered on the game.

71.   The method as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 70, wherein the gaming console allots a block of numbers within the predetermined range to the game.

72.   The method as claimed in claim 71, wherein the gaming console allots the block of numbers containing the lowest numbers in the predetermined range to the game.

73.   The method as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 72, wherein the feature outcome is a simplified game having a higher probability of success than the main game.

74.   The method as claimed in claim 73, wherein the feature game provides a plurality of pseudo-reels with a restricted number of different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

75.   The method as claimed in claim 74, wherein the feature game provides 3, 4, or 5 pseudo-reels with 2, 3 or 4 different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

76.   The method as claimed in claim 74 or 75, wherein the symbols are of equal value and equally weighted on each reel.

77.   The method as claimed in any one of claims 74 or 75, wherein the prizes are of unequal value and the symbols have different weightings on at least one reel.

78.   The method as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 77, wherein one or more gaming consoles are associated with the method, each of which is connected to a gaming network and includes signal output means arranged to produce an output signal in response to operation of the respective console, such that a central feature jackpot system connected to the network provides an incrementing jackpot pool, the method including increasing the jackpot pool in response to signals from the connected consoles and when the feature jackpot game on each machine awards a jackpot drawing the jackpot from the jackpot pool.

79.   The method as claimed in claim 78, wherein the jackpot pool is incremented with each game played on each gaming console in the system.

80.   The method as claimed in claim 78, wherein the jackpot pool is incremented with each token bet on each game played on each gaming console in the network.

Sub B2

81.   A random prize awarding feature to selectively provide a feature
outcome on a gaming console, the console being arranged to offer the feature
outcome when a game has achieved a trigger condition, the console including
trigger means arranged to test for the trigger condition and to initiate the
5   feature outcome when the trigger condition occurs, each console being
arranged to play a main game during which testing for the trigger condition
occurs, and wherein the feature outcome initiated by the trigger condition is
the awarding of one or more feature games, there being one or more gaming
consoles associated with a gaming system, each of the gaming consoles being
10   connected to a gaming network and including a signal output means arranged
to produce an output signal in response to operation of the respective
console, such that a central feature jackpot system connected to the network
provides an incrementing jackpot pool which increases in response to signals
from the connected consoles, and the feature jackpot game on each machine
15   awards a jackpot drawn from the jackpot pool.

82.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 81, wherein the jackpot
pool is incremented with each game played on each gaming console in the
system.

83.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 81, wherein the jackpot
20   pool is incremented with each token bet on each game played on each
gaming console in the system.

84.   The prize awarding feature of claim 81, wherein the main game is a
standard game normally offered on the console and each feature game is a
jackpot game associated with a special jackpot prize.

Sub cl 2 25   85.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 81 to 84
wherein the feature outcome is a simplified game having a higher probability
of winning a major prize than in the main game.

86.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 85, wherein the feature
game provides a plurality of pseudo-reels with a restricted number of
30   different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the
reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

87.   The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 85, wherein the feature
game provides 3, 4, or 5, 6 or 16 pseudo-reels with 2, 3 or 4 different symbols
on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same
35   symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

Sub. a23> 88. The prize awarding feature as claimed in claim 85 or 86, wherein the symbols are of equal value and equally weighted on each reel.

89. The prize awarding feature as claimed in any one of claims 81 to 88 wherein the prizes are of unequal value and the symbols have different
5 weightings on at least one reel.

Sub. 88> 90. A gaming system providing a progressive jackpot feature, and including at least one gaming console having a random prize awarding feature to selectively provide a feature outcome, the console being arranged to offer the feature outcome when a game has achieved a trigger condition,
10 and including trigger means arranged to test for the trigger condition and to initiate the feature outcome when the trigger condition occurs, the console being arranged to play a main game, during which testing for the trigger condition occurs, and wherein the feature outcome initiated by the trigger condition is the awarding of one or more feature games, the gaming console
15 being connected to a gaming network and including a signal output means arranged to produce an output signal in response to operation of the respective console, such that the progressive jackpot feature is implemented using a central feature jackpot system connected to the network to provide an incrementing jackpot pool which increases in response to signals from each
20 of the at least one connected consoles, and each feature game awards a jackpot drawn from the jackpot pool.

91. The gaming system as claimed in claim 90, wherein the jackpot pool is incremented with each game played on each gaming console in the system.

92. The gaming system as claimed in claim 91, wherein the jackpot pool is
25 incremented with each token bet on each game played on each gaming console in the system.

93. The gaming system of claim 92, wherein the main game is a standard game normally offered on the console and each feature game is a jackpot game associated with a special jackpot prize.

Sub. 89> 30 94. The gaming system as claimed in any one of claims 90 to 93 wherein the feature outcome is a simplified game having a higher probability of winning a major prize than in the main game.

95. The gaming system as claimed in claim 94, wherein the feature game provides a plurality of pseudo-reels with a restricted number of different
35 symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

96.   The gaming system as claimed in claim 94, wherein the feature game provides 3, 4, or 5, 6 or 16 pseudo-reels with 2, 3 or 4 different symbols on each reel and a jackpot is activated if after spinning the reels the same symbol appears on a win line of each reel.

Sub . a24> 5

97.   The gaming system as claimed in claim 94 or 95, wherein the symbols are of equal value and equally weighted on each reel.

98.   The gaming system as claimed in any one of claims 90 to 97 wherein the prizes are of unequal value and the symbols have different weightings on at least one reel.

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